GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:106
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2004
PATENT RIGHTS FOR AYURVEDA
Radhakrishnan Shri Varkala

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that many foreign countries have established Ayurveda Universities and about to get patent rights over traditional Indian systems of therapeutic practices;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps initiated by the Government/proposed to be initiated to get patent rights for Ayurveda preparations; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a)to(d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 106 FOR 8TH DECEMBER, 2004

There is no information regarding establishment of Ayurveda Universities in foreign countries, although Ayurveda as a subject is being taught in many countries. As per provisions of the trade related intellectual property rights, patents can be held by individuals and organisations for developing products and processes, which reveal non-obviousness, industrial use and novelty and cannot be granted for which prior knowledge already exists.

In order to prevent mis-appropriation of traditional knowledge of the Indian Systems of Medicine, Government of India have initiated a project called the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL). The medicinal usage of plants and formulations described in the ancient texts are being digitalised under the project in five international languages i.e. English, French, German, Spanish and Japanese, for references of patent offices, internationally with a non-disclosure agreement so that the applications seeking patent by suppressing factual information are rejected at the examination stage itself. Digitalization of 36,000 Ayurvedic formulations has already been completed in the first phase.